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WESTAMPTON - Creative ways to cut energy consumption were highlighted at the Burlington County Institute of Technology's campus on Woodlane Road, where U.S. Rep. John Adler convened his second Energy Expo.

About 15 area businesses and other organizations, including NJ Transit, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance and South Jersey Gas Co., provided free information to visitors. Another expo was held in Ocean County earlier this month, following Adler's vote in support of the American Clean Energy and Security Act. The controversial legislation mandates cuts in carbon emissions and supports renewable, domestic energy.

"In this tough economy we're putting people together in ways that are good for the economy and the environment at the same time," Adler, D-3rd of Cherry Hill, said at Wednesday's event. "People love it."

A representative from Medford Heating on Route 70 was on hand to promote the company's decision to use something known as "bioheat" for all of its residential clients. Bioheat is a mixture of traditional heating oil and soy-based biodiesel.

The change, according to representative Sherrill Byrne, came after company president Steve Foulk decided to "make a difference" by using less foreign oil. Byrne said the switch has resulted in better lubrication and longevity for home heating equipment, among other benefits. Advertisement

James Nagle was at a table representing ENERActive Solutions of Asbury Park. ENERActive, the company vice president said, is an energy consulting firm that helps clients audit their energy use to look for ways to slash consumption.

"Basically, we do anything to reduce energy usage for the customer," Nagle said.

ENERActive recently completed an energy audit for Bordentown High School. Before that, it did the same for the Mount Laurel School District, Nagle said.

While Adler's support of the clean energy bill drew dozens of residents and business people to the expo, it also brought 20 protesters to the school.

Among the protesters was Bill Haney, chairman of the Burlington County chapter of a group called the 912 Project. He said his group formed because of concerns about the Obama administration and the general direction of government.

Haney, a Tabernacle resident, said the clean energy bill was unconstitutional, would result in job losses and would put a heavy burden on future generations.

"They are forcing these issues on the taxpayer," he said.